

ABSTRACT

An apparatus and a method for preventing a user from bypassing a viewer blocking system using program related information, such as content ratings, included in a program signal. The present invention prevents the user from exploiting the time delay associated with detecting, decoding and comparing the program related information by switching channels to observe portions of objectionable programs before the blocking system can react. The present system comprises a processor (110) which controls the output of a selected program signal (VIDEO, VIDEO IN, AUDIO IN) in response to a determination of whether an associated program related information meets a user selected blocking criteria. The processor blocks display of a program signal when a predetermined sequence of signal channel selections is detected and then continues to block the display of the program signal at least until the determination is performed. The predetermined sequence of signal channel selections may comprise continual re-tuning of the same channel and/or switching between two channels. The present method comprises detecting a particular sequence of signal channel selections and blocking the display of the program signal upon detecting the predetermined sequence. If the predetermined sequence of signal channel selections is detected the display blocking is maintained at least until a program related information associated with the program signal is detected and a determination of the satisfaction of a user selected blocking criteria is performed.